

and community-based services. Do those services exist right now? They do. How do they exist? Pretty much in the United States by way of a waiver, so it is not the standard policy; it is done by waiver.

We want to make sure that it is more of a standard feature, really, a choice that people have to get the care in the community or in the setting that they want. It is critically important that we have in the reconciliation instructions a commitment to home and community-based services. We have that now, and we want to make sure it remains in the bill in final form.

The other benefit or, I should say, the other priority here is not simply those receiving the care in home and community-based settings; it is those providing the care, those heroic frontline workers who often are not talked about enough who provide this care. Most of the care provided in these settings are provided by low-income women of color who disproportionately make up the workforce and often are making about \$12 an hour. They should have a decent wage. They should have benefits, like sick and family medical leave, and they should have access to PPE protection so that they have the protection they need to do their job and to care for those individuals.

I see the distinguished majority leader.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HASSAN). The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. I thank the Senator from Pennsylvania. I won't be that long.

#### ORGANIZING RESOLUTION

Madam President, in addition to the organizing resolution to which the Republican leader and I have now agreed, Leader McConnell and I would like to engage in a colloquy regarding certain understandings we have reached on two related issues.

First, I have discussed with the Republican leader concerns that have been raised by many Senators about the floor procedure known as "filling the amendment tree." At various points over the last several decades, Senators have been prevented from actively participating in the legislative process because the ability of Senators to offer and receive votes on amendments has been severely restricted. I appreciate and understand those concerns, and I want to assure Senators that it is my intention to have active and dynamic debates on the many issues and crises facing our Nation today. The 117th Congress will not shirk from the important issues; rather, we will discuss and debate legislative solutions to them. I am a strong supporter of the right of Senators to offer amendments and commit to increase dramatically the number of Member-initiated amendments offered in the 117th Congress. I am also opposed to limiting amendments by "filling the tree" unless dilatory measures prevent the Senate from taking action

and leave no alternative. Senators from both sides will be able to offer amendments. That is how we will operate in the 117th Congress under the new Democratic majority.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I appreciate these assurances from the majority leader. The right to offer amendments is important to Senators on our side as well, and we look forward to full and vigorous debates, including amendments, as the Senate takes up the many important issues before us. On a related note, I have discussed with the majority leader concerns that have been raised about debates on motions to proceed. I think many times cloture has to be filed on a motion to proceed because Members want to ensure they are given the right to offer amendments. Given the assurances regarding the ability of Senators to debate and amend legislation in this Congress, that should help in alleviating that practice. Also, when we are proceeding to bills with broad bipartisan support, it is my hope that we will not need to have lengthy debates on motions to proceed.

The resolution provides that the committee budgets and office space will be divided equally, subject to the customary set-aside for administrative expenses and nondesignated staff. It is our expectation that the details of those arrangements will be negotiated and agreed to by the respective chair and ranking member, in consultation with other members of each committee.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I thank the Republican leader for those assurances and for his cooperation in reaching agreement on the organizing resolution and the understandings we have just described. I look forward to working with him and all Senators to address the many urgent needs confronting our Nation.

#### RELATIVE TO SENATE PROCEDURE IN THE 117TH CONGRESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 27, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 27) relative to Senate procedure in the 117th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 27) was agreed to.

(The resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### CONSTITUTING THE MAJORITY PARTY'S MEMBERSHIP ON CERTAIN COMMITTEES FOR THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, pursuant to the provisions of S. Res. 27, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 28, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

A resolution (S. Res. 28) to constitute the majority party's membership on certain committees for the One Hundred Seventeenth Congress, or until their successors are chosen.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 28) was agreed to.

(The resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### ELECTING SONCERIA ANN BERRY AS SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 29, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 29) electing Sonceria Ann Berry as Secretary of the Senate.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 29) was agreed to.

(The resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### AMENDING S. RES. 458 OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH CONGRESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 30, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 30) to amend S. Res. 458 of the Ninety-eighth Congress, as amended.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 30) was agreed to.

(The resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Mr. SCHUMER. Thank you, Madam President.

I thank my good friend, the Senator from Pennsylvania.

I yield the floor.

#### SETTING FORTH THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

S. CON. RES. 5

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I will continue with the brief discussion about home and community-based services.

It is so critical, as I mentioned earlier, to have these services available for seniors and for people with disabilities, and it is also relevant in the life of a child. We know—and as the Presiding Officer knows well in her efforts to provide these services to those in the disability community and among seniors—that it is important to children as well. Medicaid home and community-based services provide over \$4 billion right now in support so that children can receive therapy and other necessary services to participate in school, and as I mentioned earlier, we know the impact upon seniors and people with disabilities. So that is the reason we are emphasizing, among many reasons, the investment in this bill for home and community-based services in the context of the pandemic and the devastation of the virus and more broadly.

The second issue I will raise—I know we are short on time—is an issue that I mentioned earlier. In addition to home and community-based services, this is an issue that relates to the family's ability to pay for childcare. So it affects the parents as well as the children. It is the child and dependent care tax credit. Obviously, it is an existing tax credit, a credit that parents have been able to rely on, but it is nowhere near robust enough to make it possible for more parents to afford childcare.

Here is the reality when it comes to what happens in the midst of this pandemic: We know that families have many reasons they can't make ends meet, but, also, many families have members of their families who want to get back to work. We are told that about 20 percent of working adults say the reason they are not working is that COVID-19 has disrupted their childcare arrangements. So it is both a childcare access and affordability question.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics tells us that women accounted for all jobs lost in December of 2020—not most jobs, not some jobs. All jobs lost in the United States were among women. Women lost 156,000 jobs. Their labor force participation rate is at its lowest point in a third of a century. One of the big reasons is childcare. We need to expand the child and dependent care tax credit to give parents the ability to recoup thousands—not hundreds but thousands—of dollars in childcare expenses.

That is what my legislation will do. That is what the new administration wants to do, and that is what we should do in this next COVID bill, and there are a lot of reasons for it.

I will end with this. Last year, the National Academy of Sciences released a roadmap to reduce child poverty. We have heard of the good provisions in this legislation on the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit and of the substantial impacts they have had on lowering child poverty—one estimate, by half.

Also contributing to this and to lower child poverty even more would be to enhance the child and dependent care tax credit. Here are the numbers: 9.2, 9.2, and 518. What do I mean? The National Academy of Sciences says that, if you have a robust child and dependent care tax credit, you can reduce child poverty by 9.2 percent. Guess what happens to wages. There are raised aggregate earnings across the country also by 9.2, but it just happens to be billions—\$9.2 billion. Then the 518 refers to the jobs—increased net employment by more than 518,000 jobs according to the National Academy of Sciences.

So, among the many, many things we are doing in this bill, we need to invest in home and community-based services and also invest in a much more robust child and dependent care tax credit.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 75

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 75 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. Further, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, reserving the right to object, this measure, essentially, is a pretextual, ideological, and extreme step that really detracts from what should be our primary purpose at this moment in our history.

Literally, we are fast approaching 450,000 deaths in this country, and people continue to die at the rate of more than 3,000 per day. Our economic progress continues to be stalled. In fact, it is declining, with joblessness increasing across Connecticut and the country. People are struggling to stay in their homes, put food on their tables, and pay for the medicine they need. Our goal should be making sure people have vaccines and the economic support that they need. Instead, we are here on a measure that would, essentially, take away rights, burden rights, for people—women—who need that right.

We ought to be focusing our energy and attention on winning our fight against this pandemic, but, instead, we are here, debating a pretextual and ideological bill, another anti-choice bill—yet another attempt to restrict a woman's right to choose about when and whether to have a child. This bill purports to be about protecting individuals with Down syndrome, but it is merely a pretext for requiring healthcare providers to scrutinize women for their decisions to seek an abortion. The pretext is to take away those individual rights.

As a matter of fact, this bill has nothing to do with protecting people with Down syndrome, and it has nothing to do with addressing discrimination. If my colleague would like to genuinely help people with Down syndrome, he would ask for unanimous consent on legislation that the disability community actually has supported. The National Down Syndrome Society wants increased funding for medical research at the National Institutes of Health. It wants better educational opportunities and settings for people with Down syndrome. It wants laws and policies that ensure economic self-sufficiency and better workplaces and a fight against discrimination.

Those are the legislative priorities of this disability community, but what this bill actually does is it essentially requires healthcare providers to interrogate women about their decisions to seek an abortion. Healthcare providers who might violate this bill, if it ever became law, would incur fines, imprisonment, or both.

In conclusion, people have a right to make these kinds of deeply personal decisions. Those rights are protected under our Constitution. We should be protecting people with Down syndrome, and we should be expanding their opportunities and fighting discrimination, not using them as a pretext for restricting and burdening a woman's right to choose.

Therefore, I object.